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ABSTRACT

Prepared to highlight the accomplishments of the Florida State Board of Community Colleges during its first five years of existence, this report reviews the Board's development and the progress of Florida's 28 community colleges. Following introductory comments on the creation and purposes of the board, the report looks at the Board's legislative lobbying program and its impact on general revenue and capital outlay appropriations and on the state's funding formula. Tables and graphs illustrate the increase in general revenue appropriations from $192.3 million in 1978-79 to $498.5 million in 1988-89; in capital outlay appropriations from $24,502,234 in 1978-79 to $89,619,256 in 1988-89; and an increase in enrollment from 598,217 in 1977-78 to 873,057 in 1986-87. The next sections examine the Board's activities and achievements in the areas of program review, equal and open access, articulation with four-year colleges, economic development, literacy centers, the Florida Academic Improvement Trust Fund, trustee training, and information management. Following a summary of the Board's 5-year master plan for the state's community colleges, the paper discusses several initiatives proposed by the board to establish economic development as a primary mission of the community colleges. (JMC)

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ED315118

SPECIAL 5 YEAR REPORT

1983-1988

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
FLORIDA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

JC 900 105

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240.305 State Board of Community Colleges; establishment.— There is established a State Board of Community Colleges of the Department of Education with the necessary powers to exercise responsibility for statewide leadership in overseeing and coordinating the individually governed public community colleges. There shall continue to be maximum local autonomy in the governance and operation of individual community colleges. The board shall be subject at all times to the overall supervision of the State Board of Education.

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Executive Director
Clark Maxwell, Jr.
Community College System

Providing the opportunity to change is the most valuable attribute of Florida's Community College System. For many individuals, community colleges represent hope and a chance to move in a new direction. Just as we impact the lives of our students, they, in turn, direct the evolution of our System. As we respond to their diverse needs, new ideas are successfully implemented and ongoing services are improved. With this dynamic process in mind, the 1983 Florida Legislature established the State Board of Community Colleges with the intent of providing coordination, support and oversight to an already vital system. As the State Board celebrated its 5th Year and reviewed its progress and the movement of the entire system, one fact stood out - the individual parts of our System have come together into a united whole. We have emerged from these formative years with one voice. Nowhere is the impact of this act of coalescing more evident than in the strong support we have received from the Governor, the Legislature and the Cabinet. For the first time, we have the resources to begin addressing our unabated growth.

Through this report, the State Board of Community Colleges is sharing its accomplishments for the past five years. These activities reflect only one segment of the outstanding and voluminous achievements of Florida's entire community college system. Every accomplishment presented in this report is the result of new spirit of system-wide cooperation and strong management. We express appreciation to everyone who has been a part of these events — the Commissioner of Education, the boards of trustees, the presidents, the Florida Association of Community Colleges, the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission, and most importantly the faculty and students.

Our system is recognized nationwide as a leader in higher education. The State Board of Community Colleges rededicates itself to a leadership role that builds on this national standing to ensure that all of our citizens continue to have the opportunity to improve their quality of life.

Sincerely,

C. Maxwell

Clark Maxwell, Jr.

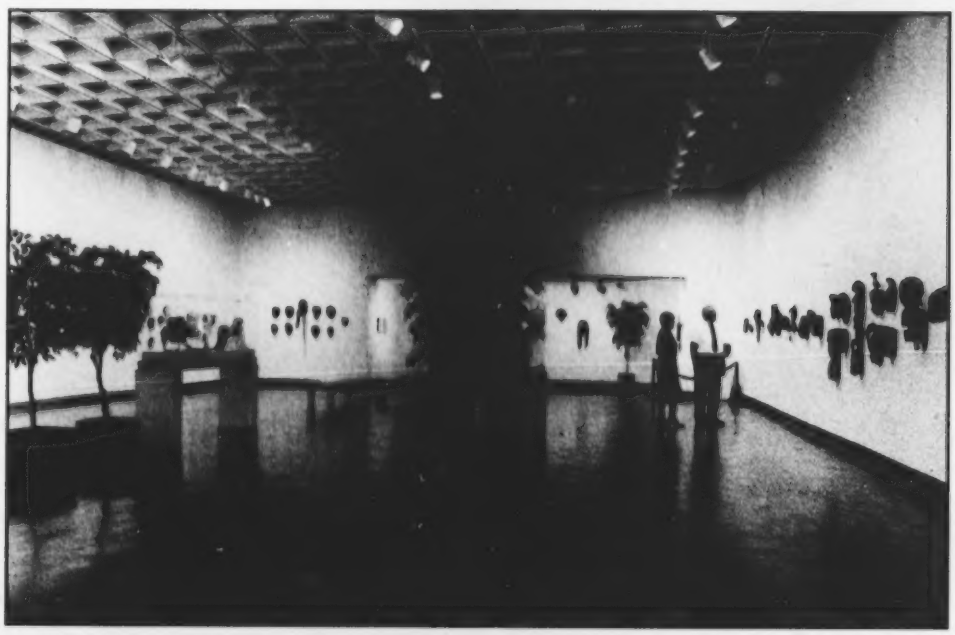
INTRODUCTION

In October 1983, the Florida Legislature and the Office of the Governor renewed its commitment to quality education by establishing the State Board of Community Colleges with the challenge to operate and maintain Florida's Community College System in a coordinated, efficient and effective manner. The new board was to ensure that the 28 community colleges were vital in their response to community needs for academic and vocational education. Completing its 5th year, the State Board is pausing to reflect upon its original mission and accomplishments, and to look ahead to the many challenges facing the community college system. Addressing these challenges has required (and continues to require) input and hard work from every aspect of Florida's Community College System.

Governor Bob Graham signs the 1983 bill establishing the State Board of Community Colleges.

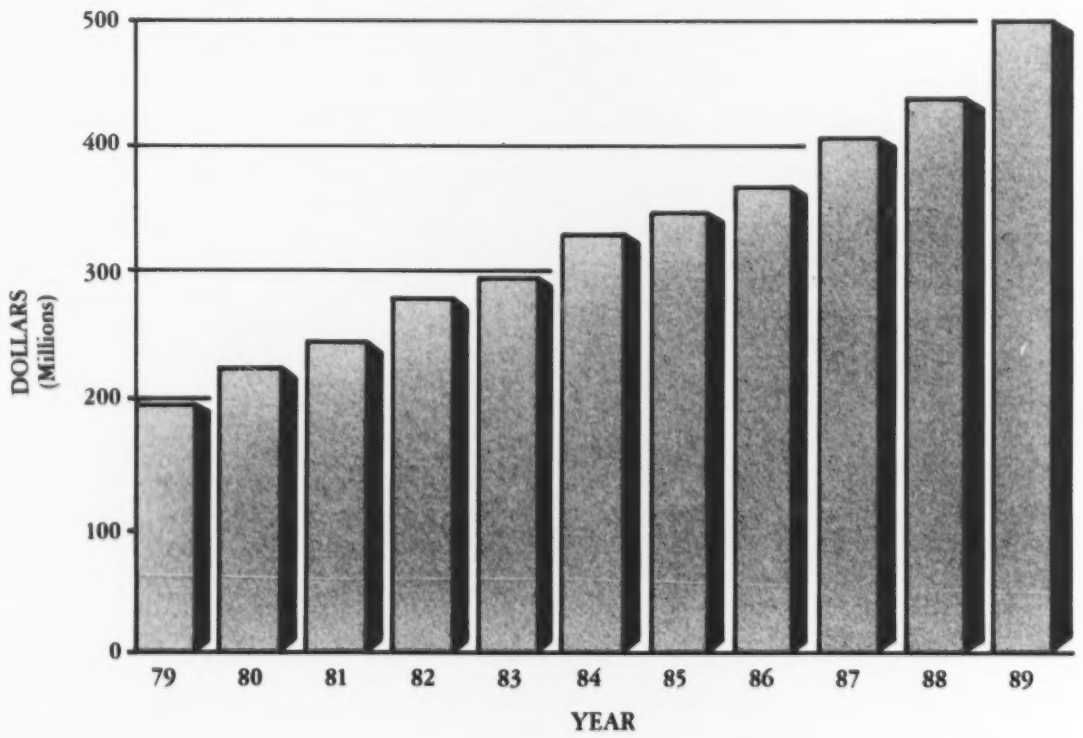
Assuring that the community college system presents a unified approach to the public and the Legislature has been a major goal of the State Board of Community Colleges. Through a team effort, community colleges have achieved an enhanced level of understanding on the part of the Legislature, the Office of the Governor, and the Cabinet, as to the System's service delivery, resource needs, and accomplishments. This vigorous united team approach has involved all facets of the community college system — the boards of trustees, the 28 presidents, the Florida Association of Community Colleges, State Board members and staff. A coordinated budgeting and lobbying effort with the Office of the Commissioner of Education and the Board of Regents has also been a major factor in meeting resource needs for community colleges.

Legislative allocations for the System have progressively increased in recent years with community colleges now at parity with the state university and secondary school systems **in the operating and facilities budget.**



ANALYSIS OF STATE APPROPRIATIONS
GENERAL REVENUE
COMMUNITY COLLEGES

YEAR	TOTAL APPROPRIATION	TOTAL INCREASE	PERCENT INCREASE
	(Dollars Rounded To Nearest Millions)		
1978-79	192.3		
1979-80	221.1	28.8	14.98
1980-81	244.8	23.7	10.72
1981-82	278.1	33.3	13.60
1982-83	296.4	18.3	6.58
1983-84	320.5	24.1	8.13
1984-85	334.4	13.9	4.34
1985-86	354.1	19.7	5.89
1986-87	390.4	36.3	10.25
1987-88	439.7	49.3	12.63
1988-89	498.5	58.8	13.37



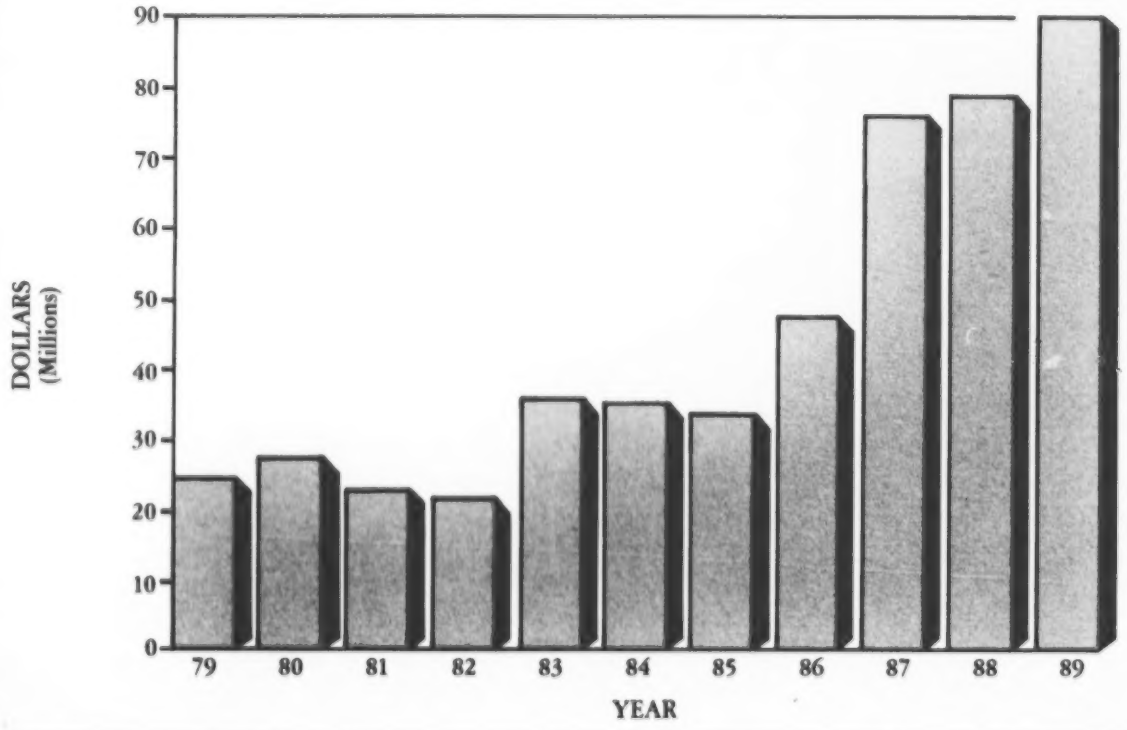
The total level of funding for community colleges has increased from $297.1 million in 1982-83 to $498.5 million in 1988-89.

Long-standing unmet facility needs throughout the System are being addressed by the Legislature. Through the development of priority listings and justifications for fixed capital outlay projects, the State Board and the 28 colleges have been able to impact the legislative commitment in this area.

The allocation for facilities was $89,619,256 in 1988-89, a drastic contrast with the 1983-84 facility allocation of $35,154,481. With an aggregate budget of $600,000,000, the Community College System is moving forward with a significant impact upon the State's economy.

PECO APPROPRIATIONS

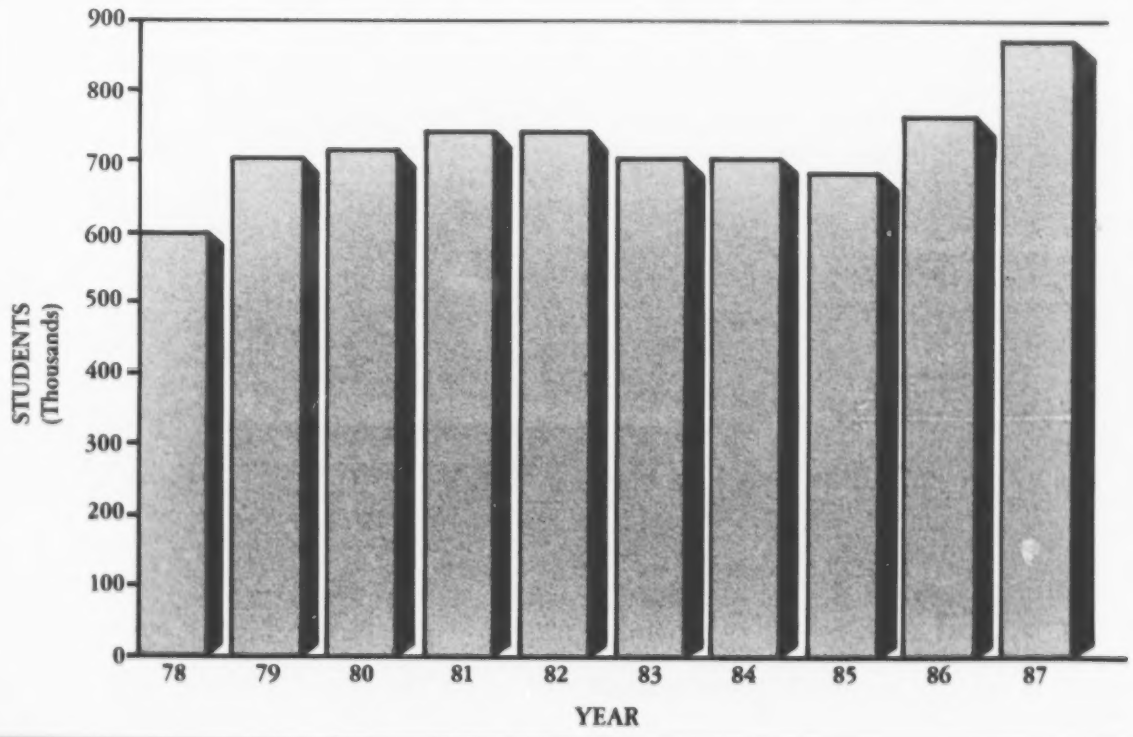
FY	TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS (Dollars)	TOTAL INC/DEC (Dollars)	PERCENT INC/DEC
1978-79	24,502,234		
1979-80	27,198,114	2,695,880	11.00
1980-81	22,875,257	(4,322,857)	(15.89)
1981-82	21,546,703	(1,328,554)	(5.81)
1982-83	35,426,441	13,879,738	64.42
1983-84	35,154,481	(271,960)	(0.77)
1984-85	33,580,132	(1,574,349)	(4.48)
1985-86	47,283,911	13,703,779	40.81
1986-87	75,946,586	28,662,675	60.62
1987-88	78,611,796	2,665,210	3.51
1988-89	89,619,256	11,007,460	14.00



Another major example of legislative responsiveness to the needs of community colleges came with acceptance of a systematic approach for funding enrollment growth. This funding formula adopted by the Legislature in 1986 enables each community college to address rapid growth throughout the System. Student enrollment has increased by 38% over the past decade and by 13% from 1985-86 to 1986-87 with 873,057 students being served. Many factors contribute to this growth including open access, geographical accessibility, scheduling flexibility, affordable tuition and enrollment ceilings for many state universities. The value of this funding formula is evident and it will become even more significant if the growth of community colleges continues at its current rate.

ANNUAL STUDENT ENROLLMENTS 1977-78 THROUGH 1986-87 COMMUNITY COLLEGES

YEAR	STUDENT HEADCOUNT	TOTAL INC/DEC	PERCENT INC/DEC
1977-78	598,217		
1978-79	703,740	105,523	17.64
1979-80	719,049	15,309	2.18
1980-81	742,823	23,774	3.31
1981-82	744,595	1,772	0.24
1982-83	704,453	(40,142)	(5.39)
1983-84	703,610	(843)	(0.12)
1984-85	685,320	(18,290)	(2.60)
1985-86	766,518	81,198	11.85
1986-87	873,057	106,539	13.90



Being able to document the effectiveness of community college services and to identify areas where changes are required to meet student and community needs is essential. This is especially significant when seeking and justifying additional resources. The program review activities of the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) have played a key role in generating new policies/procedures, budgetary/substantive legislation, and in enhancing the overall management and service delivery of the 28 community colleges.

When the State Board was created in 1983, there was no defined program review process. During 1983 and 1984, the State Board staff in conjunction with a task force of community college representatives designed the basic program review approach currently in place.

The SBCC review system is a powerful tool in assessing the educational needs of the system and for bringing about improvements. In many respects, the reviews help to set the agenda for the future of the colleges and the system as a whole, as they not only look at the present status of programs, but also set forth the actions required to keep programs relevant to the needs of the students and society.

Current program review data used to evaluate the associate of arts degree indicate:

- More than two-thirds of the students entering Florida's higher education system choose a community college for their first two years of study
- Community college student transfers comprise 69.9% of the students for the upper divisions of Florida's nine public universities
- Community college students who transfer to Florida's State University System perform as well academically as university students who entered as freshmen and complete the coursework in the same period of time.

Program reviews conducted at the local college level have resulted in the elimination of over 250 duplicative or obsolete vocational programs since 1984.

State Board reviews of degree and certificate programs examine state-wide issues and problems which may affect policies, student transfer needs, curriculum reform, and funding priorities. Legislative interest, other state agency concerns, business/industry needs, Board of Regents reviews or Postsecondary Education Planning Commission studies may trigger this type of review. To date, eleven of these comprehensive reviews have been completed and four are in progress. These reviews frequently utilize regional public hearings, individual interviews with key persons, and outside consultants to provide opportunities for everyone to be heard and to lend perspective to the review findings and recommendations. Because of the inter-agency aspects of many of the reviews, the process has drawn agency people together at the state level into new and productive relationships which extend beyond the conclusion of a review.

Representatives from business and industry are also involved through participation on evaluation teams, involvement in public hearings, and through personal interviews. This input into the review process has been vital in gaining an understanding of adjustments needed to make programs more relevant in meeting the economic development needs of the state. Trends in enrollment, program completion, and job placement rates are examined to determine the extent to which programs are being impacted by state-wide economic conditions or major shifts in the requirements for job entry.

As a result of these reviews, the need for additional resources has been documented and appropriated in areas such as equipment upgrading in occupational programs and areas of instruction. Program approval standards have also been modified in areas such as law enforcement training.

The founders of Florida's community colleges recognized the potential of a two-year college system and put in place the thread that binds the system — reasonable cost, an open-door policy, and geographical accessibility. Fifty-four campuses and over 1,000 delivery sites make it possible to attend classes while remaining and working in the community. Students can schedule classes on a full or part-time basis with weekend and evening classes offered for the working student. These factors have provided those with little hope of an education beyond high school, the opportunity to improve themselves. For the economically deprived, doors have been opened that would have otherwise remained closed. Community colleges continue to serve diverse populations and more older, part-time, and non-traditional students. The average age of a community college student is 28 years with 58% female representation and 22.4% minority representation. The number of individuals entering the System who have self-identified as disabled is 4,642.

Major state-wide initiatives by the State Board during the past five years have addressed equal and open access and specialized student needs. A state-level Task Force on the Decade of the Disabled was appointed by the State Board of Community Colleges to address the specific needs of the disabled community college student. After almost a year of research and planning, the SBCC Task Force developed a comprehensive agenda of 16 recommendations to serve as goals for the 28 community colleges to use in meeting the needs of this student population. These recommendations combined with rule changes addressing institutional policies and procedures on substitutions of graduation requirements for disabled students, have significantly enhanced service delivery for the disabled.

In response to the issue of AIDS, the State Board of Community Colleges developed and adopted guidelines for the individual community colleges to utilize in formulating a local AIDS policy. These guidelines were based upon the most current case law and medical knowledge pertaining to AIDS.

Black enrollment in the postsecondary system has been declining nationwide in recent years. Florida's community colleges have experienced a 30% decline in black enrollment during the last decade. To address this issue and other equal access issues for Florida's Community College System, the State Board has spearheaded a variety of activities. In 1985, a state-level position was established to coordinate educational opportunity programs system-wide and formalized reviews of equity plans for each of the 28 community colleges were initiated. This review process is intended to assure that the plans comply with procedural and legal guidelines. The state-level equity coordinator provides on-going technical assistance in the development and implementation of individual college black student recruitment and retention programs. In 1986, the State Board adopted rule changes which now require individual community colleges to spend a minimum of 25% of staff and professional development allocations to support equity related activities. To address resource needs for this critical area of service, the 1988 Legislature provided approximately $1 million to fund full-time equity coordinators at each community college.

In April 1988, the SBCC initiated and participated in a joint meeting of the State Board of Community Colleges, the Board of Regents, and the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission to review the status of minority student participation in Florida's postsecondary education system. A commitment was made by all representatives to pursue joint long-range planning for policy and program development to positively impact the problem of declining black enrollment.

Part of accommodating a student's educational goal is assuring cooperative efforts throughout the entire education system offering each student the opportunity to advance rapidly. Community colleges are the primary point of access to post-secondary education in Florida. The two years spent at a community college combined with two more years at an upper division institution is a profitable program for both students and taxpayers. This two-plus-two system, established by state policy in the 1960's, has served Florida well. A state-wide transfer (articulation) agreement between all public higher education institutions enables students to pursue their studies at the baccalaureate or advanced degree level with little or no loss of time or credit. This process is the result of an Articulation Agreement initiated in 1959 and revised in 1971. Community colleges have also entered into articulation agreements with private institutions.

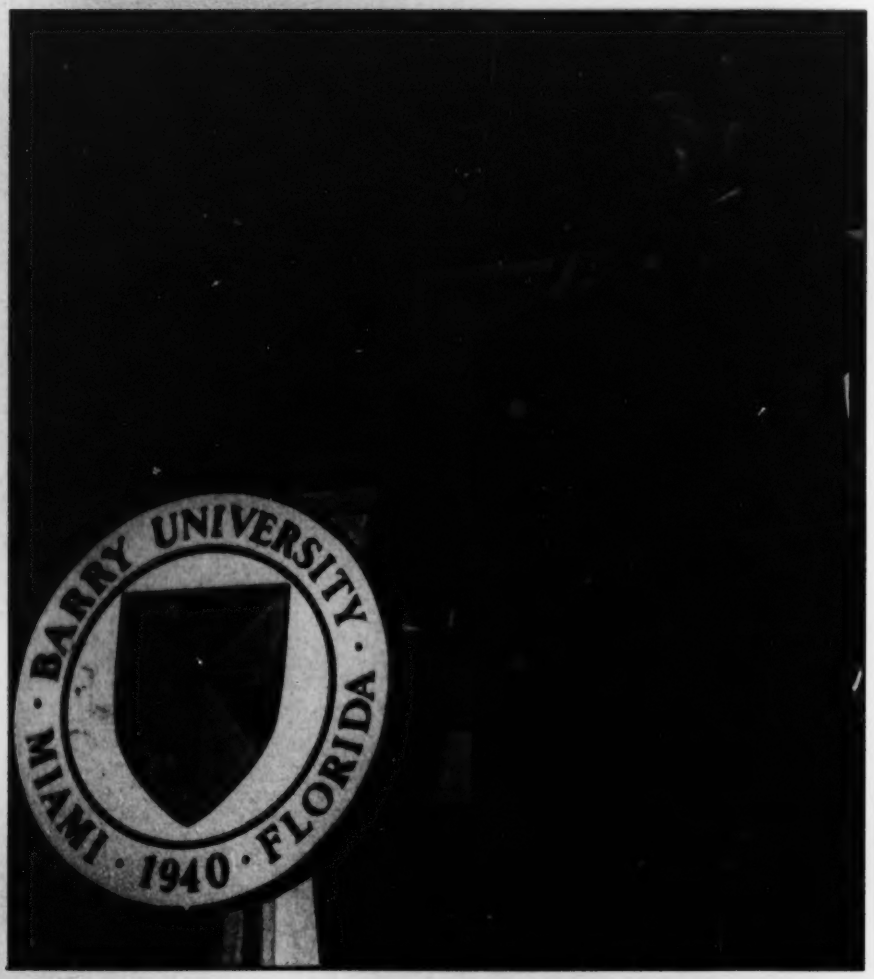
A major study of the role of community colleges in the articulation process was recently completed by the State Board of Community Colleges Task Force on Articulation. Established in 1987, the Task Force reviewed the legal basis for the articulation system in Florida, analyzed existing system-wide data, and conducted a national survey of state articulation systems. The 1988 Articulation Study revealed that "Florida's Articulation System is unique in the United States, and perhaps internationally. This uniqueness is primarily due to a consciously created structure of higher education that incorporates community colleges as the primary provider of freshman/sophomore education and anticipates the movement of students among colleges and universities as the norm rather than the exception. The results of the national survey clearly indicate that while other states have some of the provisions that Florida has, none of them have all of the parts which make up the Florida system ... Enrollment of student performance data reinforce the success of the Florida articulation system. Thousands of students move among community colleges and universities with ease each year. When problems are encountered, the vehicles for resolution are in place." Building on an existing foundation of excellence, the Task Force formulated 16 recommendations to further enhance the system.

Photo Credit: Pensacola News Journal

In addition to the articulation study and routine program reviews which assess the effective movement and performance of students, articulation officers have been established within the community college system. These officers serve as liaisons between their institutions and the State University System to ensure that articulation is indeed occurring. They also provide advisement and counseling to transfer students. The role of the community college articulation officers parallel that of their university counterparts.

Within the community college system, a new state-wide computer-assisted program referred to as Student On-line Advisement and Articulation (SOLAR) has been implemented through the State Board of Community Colleges. This system provides community college students, faculty and administrators with categories of information regarding university general admissions requirements, course/admissions requirements for a major, and the transfer process. Through SOLAR, students may compare the courses required for a specific major and identify prerequisites and admission requirements for limited access programs. The system also provides other valuable information including acceleration programs and deadline dates for admission, as well as financial aid procedures.

Articulation is not limited to postsecondary institutions. Various mechanisms are now in place to accelerate the articulation process beginning at the secondary school level and proceeding upward through the education system. These articulated acceleration methods include dual enrollment, advanced placement, the International Baccalaureate Program, early admission, the College-Level Examination Program, and the Proficiency Examination Program. The number of students involved in dual enrollment or early admissions programs has progressively increased each year with 24,802 high school students participating in 1986-87.



Miami-Dade Community College and Barry University have signed two articulation agreements that make it easier for M-DCC graduates to transfer their credits to Barry University.

The Florida Community College System is constantly recognizing and adapting to business trends and needs.

Community colleges have established innovative new programs in such areas as film production, computer integrated manufacturing, and diagnostic medical sonography, in response to industry demands and employment opportunities. The Sunshine State Skills Program administered through the State Board of Community Colleges, has played an essential part in the development of these progressive programs. Now, in its third year of operation, this program funds business and education training partnerships through the utilization of state grants. The program's focus is on new, expanding, or diversifying businesses in Florida. Through these matching grants, new businesses are encouraged and growth is fostered in existing businesses.

Corporate participants in the Sunshine State Skills Program include:

- McDonnell Douglas, Inc.
- American Express Corporation
- Motorola, Inc.
- Marriott
- Gulf Power Corporation
- Grumman Aerospace
- International Medical Centers
- Westinghouse Electric Corporation
- Buckeye Cellulose Corporation
- Barnett Banks of Florida
- Unisys
- Disney-MGM Studio

Universal Studios Florida teams with Valencia Community College to launch the largest technical film training program in the nation.

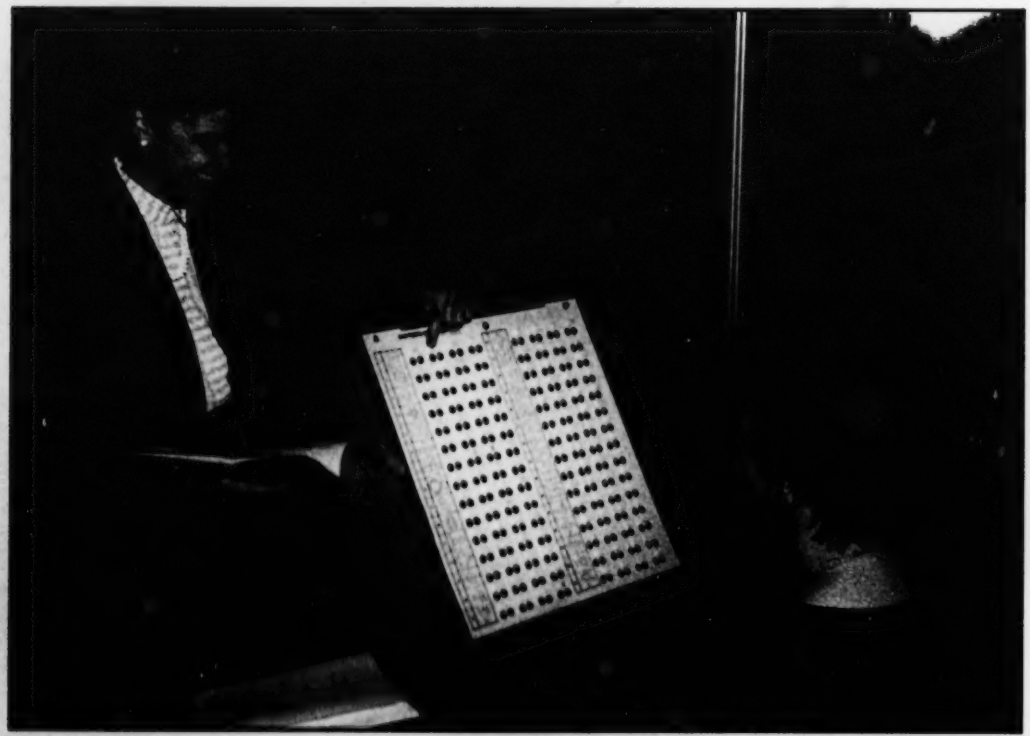
Palm Beach Community College links with Pratt and Whitney to develop a rocket safety training program.

Established in 1985, the Sunshine State Skills Program was initially funded by the Legislature at a level of $700,000. Legislative support for the program is demonstrated through an increase of $3 million in funding for 1987, and an increase to $4 million for 1988-89. Since its inception, the program has sponsored 132 individual training programs serving approximately 30,000 trainees. As of 1987-88, the State expended $4,275,040 in training funds, with private industry providing a match of $11,285.299. Twenty-six of the 28 community colleges have participated in the program. An economic development advisory committee, composed of State Board of Community Colleges members, industry leaders, and state-level vocational and economic administrators, reviews grant applications for recommended funding, monitors the progress of the training programs and oversees program evaluation activities. The funding criteria stresses innovative training courses and methods that are normally not part of the community college curriculum.

Priority is given to projects where advanced positions or a large number of trainees are the likely result. The emphasis on higher wage positions is part of the uniqueness of the program and its relationship to quality economic growth. Through this industry and education partnership, Florida's community colleges promote creative, flexible and efficient customized training services; serve as a catalyst for recruitment and start-up of businesses; and expand the State's tax base through the creation of new jobs. Matching state funding with private resources decreases the cost of the training to both the college and the business partner. Additionally, the program provides the opportunity for long-term relationships to be established between the colleges and the private sector.

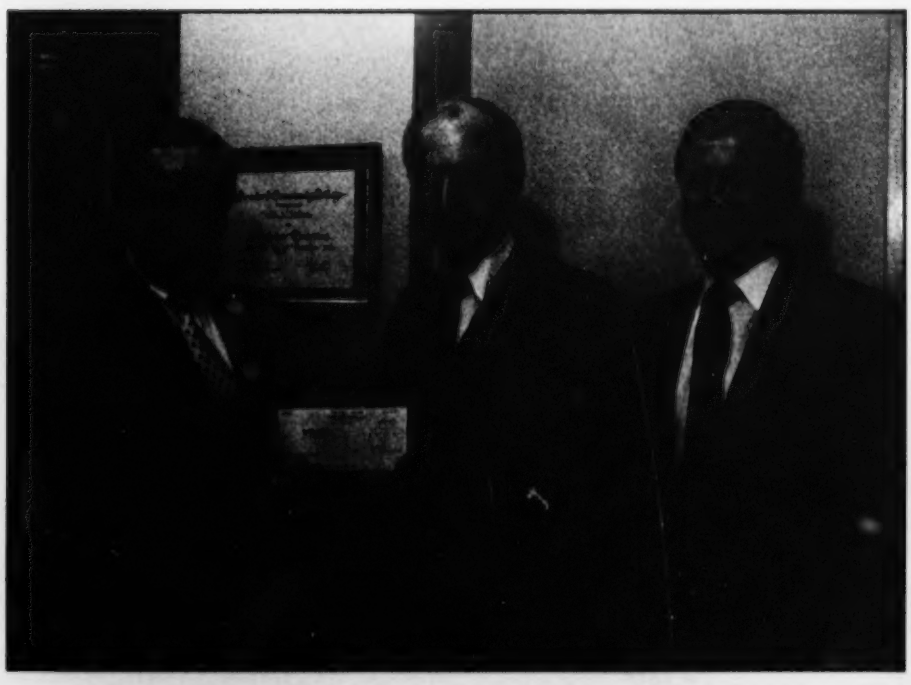
Literacy Centers

Community colleges work to help all citizens reach their maximum potential. Numerous State Board activities have played a major part in improving system-wide service delivery to Florida's residents. In early 1987, the State Board of Community Colleges developed a proposal to create and fund Adult Literacy Centers within the Community College System. The 1987 Legislature enacted the Florida Model Literacy Program Act. As a result of this legislation, $400,000 was appropriated to establish four pilot literacy centers within community colleges. These centers are located at Okaloosa-Walton Community College, Brevard Community College, Daytona Beach Community College, and Miami-Dade Community College. Three secondary school districts were also designated as sites for pilot literacy centers. These Centers, by statute, function in a referral capacity to identify, contact, and refer persons lacking in basic or functional literacy skills to appropriate providers. Although a preliminary evaluation of the effectiveness of each Center is not due to the Legislature until April 1989, interim reports indicate that the centers have been highly successful in their mission.



Operated by the State Board of Community Colleges since 1983, the Florida Academic Improvement Trust Fund provides for state funds to be distributed to local community college foundations as a match to contributors from the private sector. These funds are utilized to enhance scientific and technical activities throughout the System, to provide professional training for faculty and to endow student scholarships. From 1983-84 to 1987-88, the Legislature appropriated $1 million annually for this program. In 1987-88 and 1988-89, the annual appropriation was increased to $2 million. These funds are used to match private contributions received by the college foundations on the basis of $4 of state funds for each $6 of private funds received.

In its five years of operation, this program has received $9,114,645 in private contributions matched by $6,010,001 in state funds providing a total of $15,124,646 for quality improvements at the 25 participating colleges.



Mobil Oil Corporation presents a check to Broward Community College.

Community college trustees are responsible for the wise and frugal management of a critical state resource. Trustees come from many varied settings in life, representing the communities served by the colleges. Naturally, they bring to the role diverse knowledge, skills and interest. Through a series of workshops, conferences and informative publications, the State Board of Community Colleges has been very active in the orientation of trustees as to their responsibilities and powers and in providing them with training opportunities.

Trustee training information guides and monographs developed by the State Board are unique and have received national recognition. These publications address issues such as presidential evaluation, legal concerns, program review, ethics, financial management, board organization, strategic planning, and articulation.

Nowhere in the public sector has the impact of the information age been as widespread as it has in education. In this regard, the State Board of Community Colleges has taken a leadership role during the last five years toward more effective and efficient management of information.

Fully operational in 1986, the Annual Personnel Reporting System maintains selected data on each of the Community College System's 27,000 employees. This System replaced five reports that the colleges had previously been required to prepare for the State.

The progress of the more than 873,057 students in Florida's community college system is monitored by the State Board through a series of computer data bases. Reports show the number of students and faculty members from minority groups, the number of students who continue their college education after completing their two-year degrees, and many other basic indicators of the quality of the instruction provided by Florida's Community College System.

The State Board is presently developing a comprehensive student data base designed to combine all student data into a single computer system. When complete, this will reduce the volume and complexity of information which the State Board requires of college administrators, thereby freeing the colleges to do what they do best: educate the citizens of Florida.

Just over 5 years ago, in 1982, the State's community colleges were surveyed to determine the number and type of computers and the purposes for which they were used. Some colleges had no microcomputers. One had no administrative computing system whatsoever. Today, all colleges have a wide range of computers to support both their educational role, as well as managerial role of what today has become a comprehensive system.

Of primary concern to Florida's residents and leaders is the State's rapid growth. As a system, Florida's community colleges are in an excellent position to positively impact the pattern of this growth. In 1988, the State Board of Community Colleges initiated and adopted a five-year Master Plan which outlines the issues and trends confronting community colleges and proposes recommendations for addressing these challenges. The Master Plan provides a framework designed explicitly to provide policy guidance for strategic planning at both the state and local levels. Planning has long been a key element in the development and management of Florida's Community College System. The first formal master plan was completed in 1957 stressing reasonable cost, geographical access and an open-door policy. One has only to look at the System today to see the successful culmination of this plan. In 1983, the first five-year master plan was developed by the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission in conjunction with the State Board of Community Colleges. This plan focused on the goals, objectives, and overall mission of Florida's community colleges.

The 1988 State Board of Community Colleges Master Plan contains seventeen challenges, which emanated from the mission statement and from issues identified through public hearings and system-wide involvement. These challenges serve as a catalyst for future actions of the entire community college system.

CHALLENGES

Challenge—To continue to support open access for students, providing appropriate assessment, as well as insuring proper placement and support.

Challenge—To provide high quality postsecondary academic and postsecondary vocational education, including awarding associate of arts degrees, associate of science degrees, associate of applied science degrees and certificates.

Challenge—To strengthen the college and vocational preparatory studies.

Challenge—To reaffirm and strengthen the liberal arts general education component as essential for providing students with an effective background in the respective disciplines necessary for development of discriminating and cultivated minds.

Challenge—To continue to strengthen the transfer process across all levels of education.

Challenge—To provide sufficient learning resources that complement classroom instruction and the total learning environment.

Challenge—To establish coordinated student services programs necessary and relevant to support the students' total education experience.

Challenge—To attract and maintain high quality faculty and staff to carry out the mission of the Community College System.

Challenge—To provide educational facilities that produce a learning environment conducive to positive educational outcomes.

Challenge—To be active partners in the economic development of the community.

Challenge—To develop a comprehensive educational system that is relevant to the current and emerging community development and training requirements.

Challenge—To provide international business education to support various economic initiatives of the State of Florida.

Challenge—To establish community colleges as centers of innovative technology.

Challenge—To maintain and expand community services through which specific community needs and issues are addressed.

Challenge—To maintain and expand lifelong learning opportunities.

Challenge—To provide pre-college adult education (where authorized) that meets community needs.

Challenge—To ensure that the concept of equal access and equal opportunity is maintained and strengthened as it relates to educational and employment opportunities.

As the State Board of Community Colleges moves through its first decade, the commitment is renewed to ensure quality postsecondary educational opportunities for all Florida citizens and to address the challenges offered in the 1988 Master Plan. To this end, the 1989-91 legislative program for Florida's Community Colleges and projected State Board activities seek to build on a foundation of excellence.

Included in the 1989-91 Community College System budget requests are funding issues of continued concern to the State Board; economic development, literacy, and minority recruitment/retention. Significant strides have been made in these areas. As a unified system, however, more must be done.

In order to assist and encourage Florida's community colleges in their economic development mission, several initiatives are proposed by the State Board. These initiatives, coupled with with accompanying legislation, would establish economic development as a primary framework for Florida's community colleges and provide the lead in the economic development efforts of education.

The specific initiatives include:

- Expansion of the Sunshine State Skills Program to further provide focused training for new, expanded or diversifying business in Florida.

- Encourage the development of Economic Development Centers enabling each of the 28 community colleges to designate one staff member as the small business assistance liaison and to operate programs needed by the community through short-turn-around grants.

- Implementation of Innovative Technology Transfer Centers to provide business and industry with support in the application of new research, including assistance in staying abreast of technical changes in their field, assessing new equipment, and training/retraining employees in new techniques.

- Enhance the focus of literacy efforts to include instructional programs that would provide workers with a new level of basic skills needed to perform successfully in the workplace. These centers would refer citizens for assistance in obtaining high school equivalency. It is also recommended that the number of institutions designated as centers be increased.

The State Board of Community Colleges recognizes the significance and economic/social impact of the continuing trends of low minority student enrollment and completion in the Community College System. Black student enrollment over the period 1977 to 1987 declined approximately 30%. More importantly, the number and percentage of black students completing Associate in Arts Degrees plummeted from 1,530 (8.5%) in 1977 to 811 (5%) in 1987.

The implications of these participation patterns are numerous, but of foremost concern to the State Board is the commitment to ensure that the community college system fulfills its mission of service and access for the entire community. This translates into the desire to have each insitution equitably reflect the composition of its service area. U.S. Census Department's and Department of Labor's data clearly state the fact that Florida's minority representation is fast approaching 30% of the State's population. To impact and respond to these trends, colleges must have resources to attract more minority students. Furthermore, once enrolled, colleges must ensure that these students succeed.

The State Board of Community Colleges is supporting proposed funding for new initiatives to implement or expand services targeted at recruitment, retention and transfer of minority students. The specific proposed services include minority student scholarships in underrepresented professional fields such as allied health, computer sciences, health sciences and business; student retention programs with the capacity to identify students with academic or financial problems which place them in jeopardy; teacher mentor programs which provide counseling; and monitoring services and tutorial/student ambassador programs.

Looking Ahead

The initial vision for Florida's community colleges was a two-year system that would meet the educational needs of all Floridians. As a result of diligent leadership in the formative years, this dream is very close to reality. The 28 community colleges effectively react to the needs of the total community.

As the community colleges and the State Board move into a new era, continued foresight, flexibility, and creativity is needed to face the diverse challenges that lie ahead. The common spirit of comradeship that has moved the entire education system forward in the past five years is the essence of our success. The State Board of Community Colleges renews its commitment to provide the type of leadership that has allowed the 28 community colleges to thrive and to meet the needs of Florida's citizens.

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